

Introduction to the Special Issue

Tatsuya SATO*

**Professor of Psychology, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan*

The present issue of Ars Vivendi Journal has its origin in the international symposium entitled "Experiences of Illness and Narratives: Possibility of a Narrative Approach as an Analysis Method" held at Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan, on August 28, 2011(Sun) 13 : 30 ~ 16 : 30. This symposium was mainly hosted by Global COE Program Ars Vivendi, Research Center for Ars Vivendi of Ritsumeikan University and co-hosted by both Institute of Human Sciences of Ritsumeikan University and Graduate School of Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences of Ritsumeikan University.

We invited Professor Arthur W. Frank in August and held an open symposium. Professor Frank is a pioneer of medical sociology based on postmodern human views. He is known as the author of "The Renewal of Generosity: Illness, Medicine and How to Live", "The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness", and "Ethics, Letting Stories Breathe: A Socio – Narratology", and other works.

In this symposium Professor Frank gave a lecture on narratives as analysis method which was followed by three graduate students who presented their research. His lecture emphasized the importance of what he calls "companion stories", that is, stories people rely upon to inform their attitudes and actions. In the symposium, audience enjoyed listening to Professor Frank's new achievement and also enjoyed discussing on this issue with students presentations. All papers on this special issue come from this symposium.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all the staff responsible for preparing the symposium and anonymous reviewers for their effort to clarifying the students' papers.